

Political Pamphlet (I) 169.

THE
Danger of Moderation.

IN

A Letter to an Old Parliament-Man in the Country.

SIR,

IN the last Conversation we had together, I found you highly delighted with the Character of a *Moderate Man*; and I left you resolv'd to make it your own. I was far from saying any thing at that time to discourage you, being so Charm'd with the pleasing Description you gave, that I was my self almost Transported into the same Opinion. But upon second Thoughts, which are always more *Calm* and *Moderate* than the first, I am entirely Convinc'd, that if you persist in your Resolution, you are an Undone Man; you will lose all your Reputation and Interest in the Country, and will lead a Scurvy, uneasie Life among your Neighbours.

Moderation is a Vertue, that's certain; Mankind were agreed upon that Point long before a late Author writ a Wise Book or two to prove it. But say as fine Things as you will of *Moderation*, after all, it must be allow'd to be a very difficult and a very troublelome Vertue; and as Times go, I doubt, Impracticable: And therefore pray Sir, Consider well what it is you Undertake, before you enter upon such desperate Service.

Can you do you think, keep on your Cloak both when the Wind blows and the Sun shines? Can you stand in an Arch at London-Bridge. and not loose your Footing either at *High*, or *Low-Water*? Or is your Thumb strong enough to *Stop the Tide* at *Gravesend*, before it comes to Town; and at the same time to hinder it from Overflowing the Country below? If you can do all these mighty Feats, then you may get as much by them

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as *K. Charles* promis'd the Man who stood upon his Head on *Salisbury Steeple*; you may have a *Patent* to shew your Tricks, and venture your Neck as often as you think fit.

I remember once, as I was taking a Turn in *Bedlam*, I met a Gentleman there, who by his Address and Behaviour seem'd to be a Sober Person, in full and quiet Possession of all his Faculties; and he gave me so Rational an Account of the unhappy Condition of those poor Wretches, under Confinement in that Place, that I was extremely pleas'd with his Conversation, and took him to be one of the Physicians, or at least one of the Governours of the Hospital: But just as my Opinion of him was rais'd to this Heighth, one of the Keepers came up to him, and told him his Breakfast was set ready for him in his Room, and order'd him thither to Eat it. Upon this I ask'd him, with some Surprize, what Occasion he had to Live there? He told me he did it out of Pity and Compassion to the Miseries of Mankind: He had by long and hard Study attain'd to the Secret of Curing all sort of Madness. But in order to do it with more Certainty and Expedition, it was necessary for him to be acquainted with the several Humors and Freaks of the Persons labouring under such Misfortune; and therefore he had taken a Lodging in *Bedlam* for that purpose.

I presume Sir, this Answer would have satisfy'd you, as well as it did me, that the Man was as Mad as any of the rest, and that none but a Madman would have chosen to be in such Company, or have enter'd upon such a ridiculous Project.

The Application is very Obvious; but perhaps you may think it's not so Mad a World as I would represent it.

I know you have a mighty Opinion of the Force and Power of *Right* and *Wrong*; of the prevalent Sway of *Truth* and *Reason*; and of the commanding Influence of *Character* and *Worth*: But this is only for want of being acquainted with the true History of these Matters, and what Adventures have befallen them, since your good Father and Grandfather Died, which I'll tell you in short.

Right and *Wrong* have always been esteem'd, till lately, of an Ancient Family, that, Time out of Mind, has made a great Figure in the World; and 'twas thought by some of the Learned, that they were of one side at least, near a-Kin to *Melchisedeck*, King of *Salem*, and Originally belong'd to his Country. But of late Years, all their Ancient Titles and Bearings have been erased, and their very Arms revers'd, and nothing was allow'd

low'd to bear the Name of *Right* or *Wrong*, but what had a *Patent* or *Decree* to be so call'd by some Prince, State, or other Supreme Magistrate of a Country.

This Pretence did not hold long; For the People being appriz'd that their Governors and Magistrates had no sort of Power or Authority, but what they deriv'd from them, they assum'd to themselves this Privilege of Creating *Right* and *Wrong*. But not being able to manage it so conveniently in a Body, they Farm'd it out to certain Commissioners, for a Term not exceeding three Years at a time. And now *Right* and *Wrong* is whatever is declar'd so to be by the major part of the Commissioners, or Farmers for the time being.

Just such another Revolution has happen'd with regard to *Truth* and *Reason*. All the old Philosophy is set aside, and no other Logick is now us'd, but that of Mr. *Hobbes*; which is very properly Styl'd the *Art of Computation, or Counting*; where to *Add* is to *Affirm*, to *Substract* is to *Deny*, and the *Conclusion of a Syllogism is the Summ*. From whence it immediately follows; that the more you Add, the more you Grant; and the more you Substract, the more you Deny or Reject; and the Bigger the Summ is, the Stronger and more Certain is the Conclusion. But you must know, this new *Political Arithmetick*, is of a different kind from that which is *Purely Mathematical*; for there the same proportions always hold, in lesser and bigger Numbers, in one Town or Country, as well as another: E. G. as 5 stands to 10, so 100 stands to 200; and so likewise, tho' *Winchester-Measure* be larger than that which is us'd at other Places, yet 10 Bushels is more than 5 at *Winchester*, as well as at *York* or *Bristol*. But, according to the new way of Counting, it's quite otherwise. For sometimes it may so happen, that 5 shall prove more than 10; what are reckon'd Figures in the casting up of one Summ, shall be Cyphers in another; and the same Numbers shall be bigger or less than one another, in different Towns of the same Country, according as the Computation is made, *secundum Usum, Sarum, Bangor, &c.* But yet in one certain place, the Old Doctrine of Numbers shall constantly prevail, and the greater Number shall be always, and upon all Occasions, bigger than the less. E. G. 150 more than 100, 170 more than 130, &c. The true Reason of all which Variety of *Calculation* or *Argument* is, That all Accounts made up by Sub-Collectors and Under-Farmers, are controll'd by the General Commission, who have a Power of settling the Proportions

itions of all Numbers brought before them, by the same Rule that they determine the Measures of *Right* and *Wrong*.

There is also a newer and easier Way found out of Judging of the *Worth* and *Character* of Men, than by Examining what Principles they are of, what Qualities belong to them, what good or ill Things they have done, &c. and that is by certain *Marks* or *Names*, which immediately by one Stroke upon the Eye, or the Ear, convey the whole Knowledge of a Man to you as perfectly, as if you had been acquainted with him from his Cradle.

There are some Remains of this Method left upon Record in Antiquity ; for in *Old Rome*, upon the first Declension of its State, there were Two Factions distinguish'd by wearing *Green* and *Blew*, the Condition and Obligation of which was, That every Man, who wore Green, was to Defend and Protect, Serve and Assist, every other Green Man, and to Prosecute and Oppose, Distress and Annoy, and to utter Destruction bring every Man in Blew, in all Cases whatsoever, where their Interests should happen to interfere, whatever the Intrinsick Merit of the Blew and the Green Competitor might be, and *vice versa*. And afterwards, when *Italy* became Barbarous, Two other Famous Factions arose there, who were distinguish'd by the Names of *Guelphs* and *Gibelines* ; and they observ'd the same Measures in their Conduct one towards another.

There was an Attempt here in *England* of distinguishing Men *Worthy*, and *Unworthy* Men, by the first way of Marks ; and to that end, the *Green-Ribbon-Club* was set up ; but the contrary Party not taking the Humour of wearing *Red Ribbons*, as it was intended they should, the Names of *Whig* and *Tory* were invented ; which are now so thoroughly Known and Establish'd, that they serve as well as the *Tower-Mark*, to warrant the Value and Weight of all the *current* Men in the Kingdom ; so that every Man now *passes*, or is *cry'd down* in the Country, is *Receiv'd* or *Rejected* above ; according as he is tender'd under one of these Names. And the *Farmers* being under the same Regulation themselves, are oblig'd to take the like Care in all their Receipts.

This, Sir, being the present Situation of Affairs, what room is there for *Moderation* ?

If you come into the *Town-House*, there are but Two Sides allow'd you to sit down on ; and if you pretend to stand in the

the Middle, you'll be continually Pelted with some Trash or other, from both the Side-Boxes.

Should War begin between *Whig* and *Tory*, as not long ago it fell out between *Cavalier* and *Roundhead*, what will you do then? If you stay at Home and be Neuter, you'll be Plunder'd by both Parties; and if you come into the Field with a little *Flying Squadron* to see fair Play, both Armies will fall upon you, lest when one Side happens to have an Advantage, you should turn the Course of their Fortune by helping the other.

But supposing Peaceable Times, and that you are resolv'd to retire from all Publick Business, and enjoy the Freedom of your own Thoughts at your Country Seat, even there you'll have no Comfort, Ease or Quiet, upon the Foot of Moderation. If you Visit any of your Neighbours, there will be nothing but VVrangling and Disputing; and should you happen to ask an Unlucky Question, or Toast a wrong Health, or should not entirely approve of such Men and Things as the Company likes, 'tis a Quarrel presently between you. If you have any Business at Assizes, Sessions, &c. you'll certainly lose your Cause; for you'll never find *Justices* or *Jury-men* enow of your Name to bring you off: Nay, you'll find it a very hard Matter to have any Peace or Quiet in your Family. For when your Son goes to Town, he will probably meet with some Setters or other, that will carry him to *Dick's*, or the *Grecian Coffee-House*, the *Trumpet* in *Sheer-Lane*, the *Calfs-Head* in *Southwark*, *Jacobs Pye-House*, or some such notable Club; or some great Man may happen to favour him, with laying his Arm over his Shoulders; or some little Man, belonging to a great Man, may whisper in his Ear, that if he will come into the present Measures, he will be sure to serve his Country, and advance himself; then will the Young Fellow be so Hot and Furious when he returns, that there will be no enduring him; and if you pretend to Check him, or advise him to Consideration and Temper, he'll Tax you with deserting the Service of your Country, and spoiling your Sons Fortune: Then the VVife of your Bosom will come into the Aid of her dear Boy, and will Dispute with you, and Teaze you, out of Pamphlets and Libels, which she's furnish'd with by her Town Correspondents, a Pocket-full of which she always carries about her.

Come,

Come, Sir, I know you begin to be Convinc'd ; and that by the Light given you from two or three Chinks, you perceive as well what's done in the House, as if the Windows and Doors were all open. The only Matter you want to be resolv'd in now, is, what Side you must be of ; whether you must declare your self a *Whig* or a *Tory* ; and if you'll take my Advice upon the Point, I would have you, by all means, be a *Whig*, a True Stanch, Rank, Modern *Whig*. The way to be an *Adept* is very easy. In the first place, you must always answer to that Name, 'tis no matter whether you have any other or no. Then you must be sure to Herd and Company with Men of the same Tribe or Clan ; and then follow your Leaders, and your Business is done.

Formerly indeed your *Whigs* were distinguish'd by certain Principles and Notions which were thought to belong to them, in a more Eminent Degree than to other People. Such as were for restraining the Prerogative, procuring frequent Parliaments, lowering Favourites, removing ill Ministers, Husbanding the Publick Revenue, Stopping and Resuming Exorbitant Grants, Enquiring into Miscarriages and Male-Administrations, Searching to the bottom of Plots and Conspiracies ; and such as were Jealous of all Motions and Advances towards Popery and Arbitrary Power : These were the *Whigs* of the first Impression. Upon this Foot you your self, I remember, was reckon'd a *Whig* in King *Charles* and King *James* the 2ds time, when no Body car'd for the Name ; and since those Days you have been accounted a *Tory*, for acting by the very same Principles ; and this has given you a greater Disgust than ever, to both the Names, as tending to Confound the Characters of Men, and the Natures of Things. 'Tis true Sir, your Reflection is Just, the Characters of Men and Things are confounded and lost ; Justice's old Scales are broke, and People don't stand Vveighing and Measuring Things now as they us'd to do, but every Thing is priz'd by the *Mark*, or *Name* that is set upon it.

There was a Proposal made by some Projectors, that for the better knowing who were right *Sterling Whigs*, and who not, the lower sort should be oblig'd to wear *Green Ribbons* upon their Hats, and the Gentlemen, and Men of Quality, should have a *W.* upon the inside of their Hands, done with Gunpowder, after the manner of the *Jerusalem Mark*. But till this Project, or some other as good take effect, there is no other way of approving your self a *Whig*, but by listing under that Name ;
Marching

Marching on with your Company, and Obeying the Orders of your Superior Officers.

I know you have no great Stomach to this new Model of a Government, not known to *Plato* or *Aristotle*, and not to be found in *Harrington's Oceana*. But you must take the World as it is, and not be Hankering after the Spirit and Glory of *Numa's* Age, when you are come to the Dregs of old *Romulus*. You must not pretend to Speech and Harangue it now in Eloquent Strains; when, as the *Roman* Historian observed of his time, — *Non Argumentis sed Suffragiis Res dejudicantur*: That is, in Modern *English*, our Mouths are of no use to us, when every thing is determined by telling of Noses.

But for your Comfort after all, if you are any ways inclin'd to be a Whig, you will soon find your self surrounded with *divers weighty Considerations* moving you, and pushing you thereunto.

In the first place, you may change your Principles as often as will, without losing your Character, or your Interest. Tho' you were formerly for *Triennial Parliaments*, for *restraining the Number of Officers* in the House of Commons, &c. afterwards you may oppose all Bills of this Nature with Zeal and Success. At one time you may Press for the Importation of Foreign Plants, and at another time prohibit them, when we have none of our own Growth left. This Year you may Libel the *Ministry*, and have many Fling at their Heads; the next Year you may help 'em out at a dead lift, and not suffer any one of their *Receivers* to be touch'd. You may fit and canvas a *Cypher-plot*, and hush up an *Invasion*. In short, you may Roar or be Silent; you may look backwards or forwards; you may draw the Purse or open it, according as best serves the Interest of your Party, and yet be all the while a Whig, and all the while in the Right.

The next great Convenience of being a Whig, is that you may be of what Religion you please, or if you please of none at all; and yet if Occasion be, you shall have good and sufficient Vouches of your Religious Behaviour and Deportment, both from Church and Conventicle.

If you have any Dormant Inclination to *St. Germans* while you are Imbark'd upon a *Whig* Bottom, you may do a great many Things to Favour the young Gentleman's Pretences, and to Countenance People of that Way, and no Body shall suspect you; or if any thing be laid at your Door, you may remove it to your Neighbours, and he shall be Indicted for it.

If you are in your Heart a rank Tory, and a secret Lover of *Arbitrary Power*; under the Name of *Whig*, and in Whig Company you may tie up the Law, or let it loose, as will best advance your self, or crush your Enemy, and at the same time you may insure the Liberty of *England*, by a *Vote of Credit*.

And at last, if you still fancy the Sound, and shew, and Pretence of *Moderation*, you may Admire it as much, and Talk of it as passionately as you think fit, and you may be always crying up *Moderate Men*, and commending *Moderate Measures*, and yet never be thought the less *Whig* for it by your own Party. But whatever you do, have a care of being Moderate in good Earnest, for if any one Action, Skirmish, or Rencounter, you should happen to flinch, or give Ground, you are immediately Cashier'd.

What is it that sticks with you now? will not your Constitution bear hot and constant Service? or have you any Scruples about the Goodness of your Cause? Fie, Fie, never fear Man, take the Bounty-Money and Lift, enter into Pay presently, and my Life for yours, in two or three Winters you'll be thoroughly harden'd, and then you will be troubled no more with Qualms or Rejouncings: For Virtue is but a Name neither, as said a *Stabbing Whig* of old: *Virtue* and *Whig*! What should be in that *Virtue*?

Why should that Name be sounded more than this?

Write them together, Whig is as fair a Name:

Sound them, it doth become the Mouth as well:

Weigh them, it is as Heavy: Conjure with them

And Whig will start a Spirit as soon as Vertue.

Then Conscience, Reason, Law, Avaunt I say:

Hey, Pass; be gone. Now come again in Play.

Whig is the Word. Whig bids you go or stay.

F I N I S.

Price One Penny.

